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Message Text

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13
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 300838Z APR 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3235

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6747

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, XF
SUBJECT: PYRLIN ON SOVIET MIDDLE EAST STATEMENT

1. AT DINNER PARTY APRIL 29, DEPUTY CHIEF, SOVIET NEAR EAST DIVISION, Y.E. PYRLIN, MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO ADCM RE SOVIET STATEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST WHICH APPEARED IN PRAVDA THAT MORNING. PYRLIN DENIED THAT THERE WAS ANY SPECIFIC OCCASION OR SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH GENERATED THE STATEMENT. HE SAID ITS PURPOSE WAS TO GIVE CLEAR PICTURE OF CURRENT SOVIET POSITION AND TO GET THINGS MOVING TOWARD A SETTLEMENT.

2. THERE ARE TWO MAJOR NEW ELEMENTS IN THE STATEMENT, PYRLIN SAID. FIRST, IT IS A CLEAR DECLARATION OF THE SOVIET DESIRE FOR PEACE IN THE AREA AND FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL PARTIES, INCLUDING ISRAEL. SECOND, THE IDEA OF TWO STAGES FOR THE CONFERENCE IS A MAJOR CHANGE. THE LATTER, HE ADDED, BRINGS THE SOVIET POSITION MUCH CLOSER TO THE U.S. PROPOSAL FOR PRELIMINARY TALKS.

3. ADCM POINTED OUT TO PYRLIN THAT STATEMENT'S INSISTENCE ON PLO ATTENDANCE DURING BOTH STAGES OF CONFERENCE WOULD STILL PRESENT FAMILIAR PROBLEMS AND ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY SOVIET FLEXIBILITY ON THIS POINT. PYRLIN REPLIED THAT THERE WAS INDEED SOME FLEXIBILITY HERE BUT NOT NECESSARILY IN THE SOVIET POSITION. "THE ARABS MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE CONCESSIONS ON
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THIS AND WE CANNOT BE IN A POSITION OF BEING HOLIER THAN THE

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POPE." HE SAID.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE WOULD NOT TAKE PYRLIN AT FACE VALUE, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT HE WAS CLEARLY TRYING TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT SOVIET STATEMENT WAS NOT MERELY FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES, BUT WAS ATTEMPT TO GENERATE REAL STEP FORWARD IN MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT PROCESS.
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